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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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DSS-4037EL (Rev. 9/89)

Transmittal No: 92 LCM-59

Date: April 9, 1992

Division: Income Maintenance

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Twelve Month Food Stamp Data Analysis Report with Upstate Case
Detail for 10/1/90 through 9/30/91

ATTACHMENTS: Data Analysis Report: Final Report Statewide FS-QC
Reviews (10/1/90 - 9/30/91) - not available on-line

Significant gains have been made in the area of Food Stamp error reduction as is evidenced by the steady decline in the Statewide error rate over the last three years. The Statewide Food Stamp error rate has decreased from 11.98% for the annual period ending 9/90, to 9.78% for the period ending 9/91. Nevertheless, since we remain above the federal tolerance level of 6%, we must continue our commitment to the Corrective Action planning process.

In upstate districts, the error rate decreased substantially from 11.21% to 7.62%, while the NYC error rate decreased from 12.42% to 10.90%. It should be noted that conclusions about this period's final error rate cannot be based on this report, since adjustments may occur as a result of federal re-review. This report should be viewed as an indicator of problem areas and used for Corrective Action planning.

Upstate, the principal error elements are Earned Income for the NPA/FS caseload and Living Arrangements/Household Composition for the PA/FS caseload. Earned Income and Living Arrangements/Household Composition account for 31% and 17% of the total error dollars, respectively.

- o For Earned Income, the principal agency error was failure to budget earned income. The highest client error was failure to report employment or a change in the amount of earnings. Certain steps are being taken to address this problem. In an effort to reemphasize the use of the Resource File Integration (RFI) System as a means of reducing these types of errors, SUNY is enhancing the RFI section of its IM/MA Managers training curriculum to ensure that appropriate case actions are taken. The training will include

management and supervisory tips on how to ensure proper resolution of RFI data. Additionally, the Bureau of Field Operations (BFO) is preparing an informational letter which will include attachments on recent RFI edit changes, model RFI procedures and local district best practices. If assistance with RFI is needed in the interim, please contact the technical advisor assigned to your districts from the BFO. Finally, a few local districts have initiated on a pilot basis a process in which households are contacted 60 to 90 days after case opening. To determine if changes have occurred in household circumstances, workers telephone cases that meet their specific error prone profile. Early results of the effort are very positive and additional information can be obtained from your BFO representatives.

- o For Living Arrangements/Household Composition the leading agency error was failure by local district staff to properly identify those individuals who should be included as part of the case. The prime client error was failure to report accurate household composition. To help eliminate these errors we suggest that you review the training package developed by the Bureau of Field Operations. As stated in 91 LCM-224, please contact Sandy Borrelli at 1-800-342-3715, extension 4-4127 (OA Userid AV3070), to request a copy of this training package.

Upcoming changes in FS regulations should contribute to reducing the error rate further. Effective May 1, 1992, the new Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) procedures for FS budgets will be implemented. There will no longer be a need to obtain documentation regarding heating costs for most households since the SUA will usually be provided based on housing type rather than whether or not heating or cooling is included in the shelter cost. This new policy should eliminate most of the SUA errors which accounted for 6.9% of the total error dollars for the 10/90 through 9/91 period.

Oscar R. Best, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Income Maintenance